

Federal funds for St. Paul have strict rules**By CHRIS HAVENS**, Star Tribune

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Federal money to cover security costs at the Republican National Convention will start to flow into St. Paul next month, but it comes with strict spending guidelines.

"This is not a lottery," said Matt Bostrom, the assistant police chief who's doing security planning. "These are taxpayer dollars."

About 66 percent of the money is expected to be spent on people and training. Supplies and equipment could make up 14 percent, and security infrastructure 20 percent.

The money will allow the city to put in some permanent equipment, such as security cameras. St. Paul has already embarked on a \$1.5 million project -- called the St. Paul Safe City Initiative -- to put electronic eyes along University Avenue and into downtown, and part of that could be covered by convention funding.

Agreements to get officers from other major law enforcement agencies in the state to work on security are still being finalized, Bostrom said.

Representatives from St. Paul and Denver, which is hosting the Democrats, recently returned from Washington, D.C., where they met with Department of Justice officials to discuss how the money can be used.

When she updated City Council members on Wednesday, Erin Dady, the city's marketing director and convention planner, said she was told, "Expect an audit."

The money can be used only for security-related items. Part of the funds will be given to the city up front, but most of it will be paid on a reimbursement basis, Dady said. The city doesn't get to keep unused money.

No construction is allowed -- barriers are fine but no walls -- Dady said.

Trash hauling wouldn't be covered, but new traffic signs could be, Bostrom said.

Matt Smith, the city's director of financial services, said several of his employees are studying the rules of the grant and will keep strict records of where the money goes.

A final grant agreement still needs to be signed, and federal officials are helping the cities draw up spending plans.

The convention will be held Sept. 1-4 at the Xcel Energy Center. More than 45,000 delegates, members of the news media and protesters are expected.

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